

Day Care Centers: Hype or Hope?

Background studies on day care
(See pag 81)

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By the end of the 1960s it was evident that under the most prosperous of conditions, public assistance was not about to wither away. A considerable fraction of the population was still outside the sweep of social security's old age pensions, survivors' benefits, or disability insurance, and also outside the sweep of the country's prosperity. "It becomes increasingly clear," the *New York Times* editorialized after the overall level of unemployment in New York City declined to 3.2 percent of the civilian labor force while at the same time the number of welfare clients in the city climbed to one million, "that the welfare rolls have a life of their own detached from the metropolitan job market."

It is detached from the national job market as well. In 1961, when there were 3.5 million AFDC recipients, unemployment as a percent of the civilian labor force nationally was a high 6.7 percent. By 1968 the national

unemployment figure was hovering around a record low 3.4 percent, and there was serious talk among economists about the possible need for a higher rate of unemployment to counteract inflation. But the average monthly number of AFDC recipients in 1968 was up to 5.7 million, almost 4.4 million of whom were children. In 1969 the monthly recipient total averaged 6.7 million, and for the first six months of 1970 it was 7.9 million.

Public assistance also has a separate life outside the growth of the economy. The gross national product was \$520 billion in 1961; in 1969 it was \$932 billion. One of the things not expected to rise under those prosperous conditions was payments to relief recipients. Yet total payments in AFDC alone in 1961 were \$1,149 million; in 1969 total payments were \$3,546 million and rising rapidly.

To put all this another way, it is roughly accurate to say that during the 1960s the unemployment rate was halved, AFDC recipients increased by almost two-thirds, and AFDC

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money payments doubled. Whatever the relationship between workfare and welfare, it is not the simple one of reduced unemployment making for reduced dependency. How has government responded to this confounding news?

For the most part over the past ten years it has responded by tirelessly tinkering with the old welfare system. Special emphasis has been placed on preparing the welfare population emotionally and vocationally for participation in the labor market, thereby enjoying not only the economic security provided by employment itself, but also the unemployment insurance and survivors' insurance, if needed, which employment gives access to. The first such effort—the professional social service approach characterized by a stated plan emphasizing services over support and rehabilitation over relief—showed no progress after running its full five-year trial period from 1962 to 1967. And so, in 1967 a series of programs was invented in order to push relief clients to work. Work experience, work training, work incentives—whatever the titles and whatever the marginal differences in program content—were all designed, in the catch phrase often used, to move people off the relief rolls and onto the tax rolls. Each program assumed that the gulf between labor force participation with accompanying economic security benefits, on the one side, and relief status, on the other side, was bridgeable.

It was not until 1967, however, that it came to be perfectly acceptable to think of mothers with dependent small children as proper objects of the effort to get the very poor off the relief rolls and onto the tax rolls.

Agreement on this question resulted from the confluence of two separate concerns. One concern was with costs and criticisms. Representative Wilbur Mills, powerful leader of the crucial House Ways and Means Committee, viewed with alarm the costs of an unchecked public assistance program:

I am sure it is not generally known that about 4 or 5 years hence when we get to the fiscal year 1972, the figure will have risen by \$2.2 billion to an amount of \$6,731,000,000 If I detect anything in the minds of the American people, it is this. They want us to be certain that when we spend the amounts of money that we do, and of necessity in many cases have to spend, that we spend it in such a way as to promote the public interest, and the public well-being of our people.

Is it . . . in the public interest for welfare to become a way of life?

A different concern motivated an HEW task force, department officials, and some of Mills' legislative colleagues. The task force showed little worry over how many billions of dollars public relief was costing, but did concern itself with the turmoil and deprivation that beset recipients in depressed rural areas and in urban ghettos. Thus, to the Mills conclusion that the costs are prohibitive, there was joined a related HEW conclusion, shared by some members of Congress, that the quality of life on welfare was intolerable.

One congressman with such a view is the only lady member of the Ways and Means Committee, Martha

Griffiths. Mrs. Griffiths was especially indignant over the conditions imposed on AFDC mothers.

I find the hypocrisy of those who are now demanding freedom of choice to work or not to work for welfare mothers beyond belief. The truth is these women never have had freedom of choice. They have never been free to work. Their education has been inadequate and the market has been unable to absorb their talents


Can you imagine any conditions more demoralizing than those welfare mothers live under? Imagine being confined all day every day in a room with falling plaster, inadequately heated in the winter and sweltering in the summer, without enough beds for the family, and with no sheets, the furniture falling apart, a bare bulb in the center of the room as the only light, with no hot water most of the time, plumbing that often does not work, with only the companionship of small children who are often hungry and always inadequately clothed—and, of course, the ever-present rats. To keep one's sanity under such circumstances is a major achievement, and to give children the love and discipline they need for healthy development is superhuman. If one were designing a system to produce alcoholism, crime, and illegitimacy, he could not do better.

Whatever the differing motivation, HEW's task force, Mills and Mrs. Griffiths all pointed in the direction of change from the status quo. And the change agreed upon was abandonment of the heretofore accepted idea that the only employable AFDC recipients were unemployed fathers.

In 1967 the Ways and Means Committee unveiled its social security and welfare bill at about the same time that HEW Secretary John Gardner unveiled his reorganization of the welfare agencies in his department. That reorganization merged the Welfare Administration, the Administration on Aging, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Service into a new agency called the Social and Rehabilitation Service (SRS). To run it, Gardner named Mary Switzer, a veteran commissioner of vocational rehabilitation who was aptly described by a local journalist as "a diligent disciple of work." This bit of tinkering was designed to send the message through the federal welfare bureaucracy that the secretary was receptive to policy change, apparently including a new work emphasis. The great drive to employ dependent mothers and provide day care for their children thus began both in the administration and in Congress two years before President Nixon discovered it anew.

Day Care

Despite an announcement by Miss Switzer in April 1969 that a reduction in the number of people on the welfare rolls is "a top priority of the Social and Rehabilitation Service" which she asked state welfare administrators "to make yours as well," it was really beyond the power of either Miss Switzer or the state administrators to effect a big breakthrough in the AFDC problem. The key to moving some people off the rolls is employment for the AFDC



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employable parent. The rub is that even training for employment, a first step, requires an expensive new industry—day care—which now lacks organization, leadership, personnel and money for construction of facilities. Moreover, once the realities of work training and day care programs are examined, it becomes evident that there is not much incentive for a poorly educated AFDC mother to accept training for herself and day care service of uncertain quality for her children.

Training AFDC mothers for employment, actually finding jobs for them, and providing day care facilities for their children present formidable problems. A recent survey of the AFDC population found that 43 percent of the mothers had gone no further than the eighth grade, including 10.6 percent with less than a fifth grade education. Work training that leads to employment at wages adequate to support a family is likely to be prolonged, at best, for this undereducated group.

The realities of the coming crunch in day care are even more troublesome. Day care provisions accompanying the 1967 work incentive (WIN) legislation did not extend to the creation of a federal program authorizing funds for new facilities. There are approximately 46,300 licensed facilities caring for 638,000 children. If every place in every licensed day care facility in the United States were to be reserved for an AFDC child under the age of six, there would be more than one million AFDC children in that age group with no place to go. There would also be consternation among the thousands of non-AFDC mothers with children of that age level who are already in day care centers.

In short, there are not enough facilities—good, bad or indifferent—to accomplish the day care job envisioned by the congressional and administration planners who still talk of moving parents from welfare rolls to payrolls. Representative Fernand St. Germain was undoubtedly right in stating in 1969 that “costs of new facilities are too much for the states to bear alone; centers will only be built in numbers that have any relation to the critical need if federal assistance is forthcoming.” No one seems to have foreseen this in 1967, however, and the point never got into the HEW program memorandum that influenced the employable mother discussions and proposals of the House Ways and Means Committee.

But the day care problem goes beyond the matter of adequate space to an important philosophical and political question regarding the appropriate clientele for the service.

There is no political conflict over the proposition that a young mother suddenly widowed and left dependent on social security survivors’ benefits should be supported with public funds so that she can stay home and take care of her children. Nor is there congressional discussion or any HEW proposal for day care for those children. If 94.5 percent of AFDC dependency were attributable to death of the father, there would be no congressional interest in day care to speak of.

But, in fact, 94.5 percent of AFDC dependency is not attributable to death of the father; only 5.5 percent is. Most of the political conflict and a good deal of the interest

in day care is over whether the public should subsidize those women—whom Senator Russell Long once called “brood mares” to stay home, produce more children—some of them born out of wedlock—and raise those children in an atmosphere of dependency.

While medical authorities and professional social workers are still divided philosophically over how accessible day care should be and to whom, Congress in 1967 and President Nixon in 1969 simply embraced the possibility of putting day care to work in the cause of reducing public assistance costs. In other words, political attention has focused less on the practical limits of day care and more on its apparent similarities to baby sitting.

Day care was simply not ready to assume the responsibilities thrust on it by the welfare legislation adopted in 1967, and it was not ready for President Nixon’s proposal to expand it in 1969. Whether day care is a socially desirable or even an economical way of freeing low income mothers with limited skills and limited education for work or work training still has not been widely considered. In the few circles where it has been considered, there is no agreement. Both the 1967 legislation and the Nixon proposal for escalation should have been preceded by the development of publicly supported, model day care arrangements that could be copied widely; by attention to questions of recruitment and appropriate educational training for day care personnel; by an inventory of available and needed physical facilities; by the existence of a high-spirited and innovative group of specialists in government or in a private association or both; and by enough experience to expose whatever practical defects may exist in day care as a program to facilitate employment of low income mothers. Instead of meeting these reasonable conditions for escalation, public involvement in day care programs for children, a phenomenon especially of the last ten years, remains unsystematic, haphazard, patchworky.

The Children’s Bureau Approach

For many years before 1969, the HEW Children’s Bureau ran the bulk of the federal day care program. It did not encourage an approach that would make day care readily available on demand. Stressing that day care can be harmful unless it is part of a broader program overseen by a trained social worker, the bureau defined day care as a child welfare service offering “care and protection.” The child in need of day care was identified as one who “has a family problem which makes it impossible for his parents to fulfill their parental responsibilities without supplementary help.” The social worker was seen as necessary to help determine whether the family needs day care and if so to develop an appropriate plan for the child, to place the child in a day care program, to determine the fee to be paid by the parents and to provide continuing supervision.

Change comes slowly to child welfare—as to other specialists. Those in the Children’s Bureau found it difficult to adjust to the idea of day care available to all comers and especially to low income working mothers. On the one hand, the talk from the top of the bureau has been about

the need to face reality in the day care picture—"when," as one bureau chief put it as early as 1967, "thousands of infants and young children are being placed in haphazard situations because their mothers are working." On the other hand, down the line at the bureau the experts continued to emphasize the importance of the intake procedure to insure that children placed in day care "need" the service.

With this approach it might be expected that while the day care expansion movement has ground along slowly, it has ground exceedingly fine. Day care undoubtedly is a risky enterprise. Every center should have a genuinely high-quality, sympathetic environment; no center should be countenanced without clear evidence that such an environment is being created, and all centers that do not give such evidence should be discouraged. The payoff, therefore, for what might seem to be excessive caution by the Children's Bureau could have been a jewel of a limited program and no second or third rate imitations. Then, when money and will were at hand, the jewel could be reproduced.

In fact, no day care activity was discouraged, whether of low quality or not. Caution on the subject of quantity did not work to guarantee quality. Whether or not there would be any day care activity depended on the states, and the federal agency was accommodating, both because it was hard to interest the states in day care at all, and because Congress provided money in fits and starts, rather than in a steady flow. When the money did come, there was an urgent need to spend it.

Funding

Between 1962 and 1965, HEW had only \$8.8 million to parcel out to the states for day care. Moreover, it was never able to count on having anything from year to year, so that it is understandable that the federal agency was in no position to threaten the states about the quality of service. The 1962 law required that federal day care money go only to facilities approved or licensed in accordance with state standards. The law said nothing about minimum federal standards. In 1962 a number of states had no day care licensing programs at all; among the states that did, the extent of licensing and the standards used varied considerably. The Children's Bureau's own guidelines were little more than advisory. To raise the quality of day care nationally, the bureau had to fall back on persuasion and consultation, weak tools compared to money.

Licensing

One certain effect of the 1962 requirement that the available federal money go only to licensed facilities was to divert a substantial part of the funds into licensing activity itself and away from actual day care services. For fiscal 1965, for example, 43 percent of the \$4 million appropriated for day care was spent on personnel engaged in licensing, while only 36 percent was used to provide day care services in homes or centers. This increased licensing activity has the effect of distorting the picture of growth of day care facilities. In 1960, licensed day care facilities had a reported total capacity of 183,332; in 1965 this had

increased to 310,400; in 1967 the figure was up to 473,700; in 1968 to 535,200; and in 1969 to 638,000. There is universal agreement, however, that the growth figure is mostly illusory, a consequence of formerly unlicensed facilities now being licensed.

Moreover, there is more form than substance to licensing decisions. The fact that a day care facility is licensed cannot yet be taken to mean that its physical plant and personnel necessarily satisfy some explicitly defined and universally accepted standards. Like "premium grade" automobile tires, licensed day care facilities can differ sharply in quality—and for the same reason, the absence of industry-wide standards. Licensing studies by public welfare agencies are invariably assigned to new and untrained caseworkers. The results are unpredictable and there is no monitoring body able and authorized to keep a watchful eye on who is being licensed.

Even from those who accept the simplistic assumption that only the absence of child care services and of job or training opportunities preclude AFDC recipients from becoming wage earners, there is no suggestion that just any kind of child care will do. Yet the state of the art in day care is not sufficiently advanced to make it reasonable to expect that states can meet the requirement to provide day care services other than in makeshift, low quality programs. There is clear validity in the complaint of the National Committee for the Day Care of Children that the 1967 legislation was not designed to help children develop mentally and physically, but was "a hastily put together outline for a compulsory, custodial service which is not required to maintain even minimal standards of adequacy."

Challenge from Head Start

Only a month after taking office, President Nixon called for a "national commitment to providing all American children an opportunity for healthful and stimulating development during the first five years of life." A few weeks later secretary of HEW Robert Finch welcomed the delegation of the Head Start program to HEW as the occasion for a new and overdue national commitment to child and parent development. Finch indicated publicly that he was not inclined to put Head Start in the Children's Bureau and instead placed it in a new HEW Office of Child Development (OCD) where the Children's Bureau was also transferred. Social planners in HEW, the Bureau of the Budget and the White House envisioned a new era: day care programs for low income children would be modeled on Head Start; simple custodial arrangements would not be tolerated; parents would be involved. The way for this happy outcome had already been paved by issuance of the Federal Interagency Day Care Requirements, a joint product of HEW and OEO, approved in the summer of 1968.

Things have not worked out. Whatever Finch's initial intention, the day care programs operated by the Children's Bureau never made it to the OCD. In September 1969 a new Community Services Administration was created within the Social and Rehabilitation Service to house all service programs provided public assistance recipients under social

security. The Head Start bureau of the OCD, according to the terms of the reorganization, was given some responsibility in Social Security Act day care programs—to participate in policy making and to approve state welfare plans on day care. But effective control of the money and policy in the day care programs remains with the Social and Rehabilitation Service. President Nixon's "commitment to providing all American children an opportunity for healthful and stimulating development during the first five years of life" has so far produced more talk than money.

A High Cost Service

There has simply not been enough thinking about the benefits and costs of a good day care program to merit the faith political leaders now express in day care as a dependency-reducing mechanism. Federal day care program requirements are, for the most part, oriented to the idea of day care as a learning experience. They are, therefore, on a collision course with supporters of mass day care as an aspect of the struggle to reduce welfare costs. The high-quality program requirements reject simple warehousing of children, but the prospects for meeting high standards are not good. It seems inevitable that there will be disappointment both for those who think of day care as a welfare economy and for those who think of day care for AFDC children as an important social and educational advance.

Consider the situation in the District of Columbia, which is reasonably typical of the day care problem in large cities. The District Public Welfare Department (DPW) in May 1969 was purchasing child care for 1,056 children, of whom about 400 were children of women in the WIN program. Of the total 1,056 children, 865 were in day care centers, 163—primarily infants too young to be placed in centers—were in family day care homes, and 28 were in in-home care arrangements, a service considered practical only for large families. The total anticipated day care load for the end of fiscal 1969 was 1,262. District day care personnel estimated that 660 AFDC mothers to be referred to WIN during fiscal 1970 (on the basis of 55 per month) would need, on the average, day care for 2 children. These additional 1,320 children would bring the likely number for whom the District would be paying for care to 2,582 by July 1, 1970. Budget requests for day care for fiscal 1970 totaled \$3,254,300 in local and federal funds (\$1,148,000 of local funds brings \$2,106,300 in federal money). Of this amount, about \$3 million is for purchase of care, the remainder for administrative expenses. If budget requests were met, the purchase cost of day care in the District would thus be expected to average almost \$1,200 per child. Costly as that may seem to be, it represents only a little more than half the actual cost.

It is the beginning of day care wisdom to understand that it is an expensive mechanism and to understand that there are qualitative differences in the care provided. The elegantly stated effort of the DPW is to secure "in addition to good physical care, the kind of exceptionally enriched day care experience that is specifically designed and

programmed to stimulate and promote the maximum in emotional, physical, and educational growth and development of the child." Alas, one-third of the centers with which the DPW contracts only "offer primarily custodial and protective care," a code phrase for warehousing. Fees paid day care centers by the District Welfare Department are supposed to be a function of the quality of services offered. Grade A centers are paid \$4.00 a day, B centers \$3.00 a day, and C centers \$2.50 a day. The department's Standards for Day Care Centers say that it uses a fee schedule for two reasons: "to assure that proper value is received for each dollar spent and, secondly, to provide a monetary stimulus to contract day care facilities to up-grade the quality of their services to meet the Department's maximum expectations." Each center's "rating," known only to it and to the Welfare Department, is for "internal use" and is not revealed to the welfare mother because, according to department officials, it would not be fair to the center to do so. A more pertinent question is whether it is fair to the mother, since 25 of the 55 centers from which day care is purchased are graded B or C, and since half of all placements are in B or C centers.

All centers—whether A, B or C—must meet the Health Department's licensing requirements, as well as additional specific standards set down by the Welfare Department in the areas of educational qualifications of personnel, program content, and equipment and furnishings. Yet there are two problems with this seemingly tidy picture. The first is the insistence of close observers that while the Welfare Department's standards for centers look satisfactory on paper, they have not been put into practice very consistently. The second is that even the paper standards will not do when the federal interagency standards become effective July 1, 1971. Spokesmen for the National Capital Area Child Day Care Association (NCACDCA) and District Health Department licensing personnel are critical of the Welfare Department's day care operation. Both suggest there is a lack of awareness in the Welfare Day Care Unit of what constitutes good day care. That high ranking is reserved, in the judgment of these people, for the centers operated by NCACDCA. The critics complain that only the NCACDCA centers can legitimately meet the Welfare Department's own A standards and maintain that the other A centers simply do not meet them. They claim, for example, that one way these latter centers "meet" the educational qualifications for personnel is to list as a director an "absentee"—perhaps a kindergarten teacher in the District of Columbia school system or that of a neighboring county.

No one disputes that most centers in the District cannot meet the Federal Interagency Day Care Requirements—particularly the child-adult ratios and the educational qualifications for staff. Even a good number of the A centers do not meet the child-adult ratio requirements, and the B and C centers meet neither the staff educational qualifications nor the child-adult ratios of the federal requirements. If the day care centers have not met the federal standards by July 1, 1971, DPW cannot continue

making payments on behalf of children for whom it receives federal matching funds. But in the District Welfare Department the view is that the requirements are unrealistic and that widespread complaints from private users who cannot afford the costs involved may result in a lowering of standards.

All the evidence suggests that day care is expensive whether the auspices are public, private or mixed. In a curiously chosen experiment, the Department of Labor decided in 1969 to fund an experimental day care program for its own employees at a time when emphasis was presumably being placed on supporting day care for the welfare poor. Its estimated budget for the first full year of care for 30 children was \$100,000, one-third of which was for nonrecurring development costs, including renovation for code compliance, equipment and evaluation. Tuition from the group of working mothers involved amounted to only \$7,300, leaving \$59,600 of public funds necessary to provide care for 30 children—a subsidy of almost \$2,000 per child without considering nonrecurring cost items. Doubling the number of children served the second year would require a budget of \$100,000, resulting in an average annual per child cost over the two years of \$1,850, or of \$2,225, if the renovation and equipment items are not dismissed as readily as the department sought to dismiss them in its official explanation.

The National Capital Area Child Day Care Association estimates costs at almost \$2,400 per child per 50-week year. Its standard budget for a 30-child center exceeds \$71,000. Tight-fisted budget examiners might effect reductions, but they cannot be consequential unless the pupil teacher ratio is drastically revised. Moreover, NCACDCA salary figures are unrealistically low. Head teachers for a 30-child center are hard to come by at \$7,300. (See table.)

If these per child costs of desirable day care are projected nationally, the annual bill for all preschool AFDC children must be figured conservatively at \$3 billion.

Client Arithmetic

Most women in the District of Columbia WIN program are being trained in clerical skills in anticipation that they will take jobs with the federal government as GS-2s. This is an optimistic view since most trainees have ninth to eleventh grade educations while a GS-2 needs a high school diploma or equivalency or six months' experience and the ability to pass a typing test. That problem aside, the District AFDC mother who completes work incentive training and is placed in a GS-2 job will be better off financially than the mother who stays on welfare. Her gain will be greater the smaller the size of her family. She will have fewer children to support on her fixed earnings, whereas the larger the family on AFDC, the larger the grant.

For many a female head of a family of four in the spring of 1970, however, the work and day care arithmetic was not encouraging as the following illustration shows: If the GS-2 mother has three children and claims four exemptions, about \$39 of her monthly salary of \$385 is deducted

Standard Day Care Center Budget for Thirty Children
for One Year

A. Personnel	
3 Full-time teachers (head teacher, \$7,300; teacher, \$7,000; teacher assistant, \$4,700)	\$19,000
2 Full-time aides (\$4,140 each)	8,280
1 Half-time clerk	2,400
Part-time maintenance help (cook, \$2,610; janitor, \$2,024)	4,634
Substitute (teacher aide, \$4,300) and part-time student aide (\$1,214)	5,514
Subtotal	\$39,828
Fringe benefits (11 percent)	4,381
Total	\$44,209
B. Consultant and Contract Services	
Part-time social worker (\$2,500), psychiatric consultant (\$5,000), and educational consultant (\$1,000)	\$8,500
Dietitian	500
Dental and emergency medical service	450
Total	\$9,450
C. Space	
Rent (\$1,800); custodial supplies and minor repairs (\$1,800)	\$3,600
D. Consumable Supplies	
Office, postage, and miscellaneous (blankets, towels, etc.)	\$450
Educational (\$400) and health supplies (\$30)	430
Food and utensils	4,674
Total	\$5,554
E. Rental, Lease, or Purchase of Equipment	
Children's furniture (\$3,000) and office equipment (\$200)	\$3,200
Equipment: basic (easels, blocks, etc., \$1,500); expendable (dolls, puzzles, books, etc., \$700); outdoor, with storage (\$1,000)	3,200
Total	\$6,400
F. Travel	
Staff (\$240) and children's trips (\$720)	\$960
G. Other	
Telephone (\$36 a month; installation \$50)	\$482
Insurance (liability, property, and transportation liability)	\$700
Total	\$1,182
Total project cost	\$71,355
Child cost per year	\$2,378

Source: Derived from budget of National Capital Area Day Care Association, Inc., Washington, D.C., August 1968.

for retirement (\$18.50) and for federal (\$17) and local (\$3.50) taxes, leaving a take home pay of about \$346 a month. If two of the three children are in Welfare Department child care arrangements, placed there when the mother entered the WIN program, the mother would pay the department about \$6.00 a week toward their care; if the mother had only one child in care, she would pay \$5.50. Assuming two children in care, the mother's monthly cost would be about \$26, lowering her net earnings to \$320.



Suppose, however, that the woman stayed on AFDC. The average benefit for a four-person family on AFDC in the District would bring her \$217 monthly. Both the welfare mother and the working mother would be eligible for Medicaid, but only the welfare mother would be eligible for food stamps. For \$60 a month she could receive \$106 in food stamps, a gain of \$46. The welfare mother's child could also receive free lunches at school while the working mother's could not. (The working mother is considerably above the income scale used to determine eligibility for free lunches, although in cases where it is felt children are going hungry, exceptions to the income scale can be made.) A school lunch costs 25 cents in the District's elementary schools. If the welfare child took advantage of the free lunch the mother would save about \$5 a month. Thus, the welfare mother would end up with a total of about \$268 in welfare, food stamps and school lunches while the working mother would have about \$320 a month. In addition, the 1967 welfare amendments allow a welfare mother to earn \$30 per month without loss of benefits. The net gain for working full time compared to working only 19 hours a month at the minimum wage is thus reduced to \$22. From this, the working mother would have expenses to cover such items as transportation and extra clothes for herself and might have to make some after school care arrangement for her third (school-aged) child.

City Arithmetic

How much work training and day care can save the District of Columbia will depend on how many trainees complete training successfully, get a job and keep it, and on how many children of trainees need child care. The Welfare Department will benefit financially by the AFDC mother's entering a training program and becoming employed as a GS-2 unless the mother has four or more children in day care—which would be most unusual. While it might give the AFDC mother of three \$217 each month, the department would pay only part of her day care cost once she begins working (the department pays all costs for the first three months). With an average cost to the department for day care of \$17.50 per child per week, using our hypothetical

GS-2 mother with two children in day care and one in elementary school, the mother would pay \$6 a week and the Welfare Department \$29 a week for day care. This working mother thus represents a monthly saving to the department of about \$56. If, however, the AFDC mother had four children in day care centers and one in elementary school, the mother would pay \$6.50 a week toward their care (this figure is the same for three or more children) and the department \$63.50. The department would thus spend \$273 a month for child care—and save nothing compared to what it would have given her on AFDC to care for her own children at home.

Prospects

What are the prospects for success in turning day care into a program that will reduce the costs of AFDC? They hinge, first, on large numbers of AFDC mothers actually turning out to be trainable and able to be placed in jobs under any conditions and, second, on finding some cheaper substitute for traditional day care centers.

The difficulty in securing the physical facilities and staff needed to develop the traditional centers looked overwhelming to state welfare administrators examining the day care problem in 1967. They did, however, see some hopes for neighborhood day care, a kind of glorified, low income equivalent of the middle class baby-sitting pool. Stimulated by OEO's success in involving poor people in poverty programs, HEW early in 1967 started pushing neighborhood day care demonstration projects using welfare mothers to help care for other welfare mothers' children. This seemingly ideal solution has its own problems. One of them is sanitary and health requirements that, if enforced, disqualify the substandard housing used by many recipients. The unknown emotional condition of the AFDC mother is an equally important problem in this use of the neighborhood care idea. A spokesman for the Welfare Rights Organization warns:

Do not force mothers to take care of other children. You do not know what kind of problem that parent might have. You do not know whether she gets tired of her own children or not but you are trying to force her to take care of other people's children and forcing the parents to go out in the field and work when you know there is no job.

This is why we have had the disturbance in New York City and across the country. We, the welfare recipients, have tried to keep down that disturbance among our people but the unrest is steadily growing. The welfare recipients are tired. They are tired of people dictating to them telling them how they must live.

Not surprisingly, day care and work training through WIN are lagging as the hoped-for saving graces of public assistance. New York City's experience is instructive. In 1967 the City Council's finance committee concluded that an additional expenditure of \$5 million for 50 additional day care centers to accommodate 3,000 additional children was warranted. "The Committee on Finance is informed," said its report, "that many (welfare) mothers would seek

employment if they could be assured of proper care of their children while at work. We feel that expansion... on a massive scale is called for." The mayor's executive expense budget for day care was thereupon increased by about 60 percent and appropriations in subsequent years have continued at the higher level. But the New York City Department of Social Services—like the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare—lacks a program for such a rapid expansion of day care. Actual expenditures have lagged. In contrast to the anticipated 50 new centers caring for 3,000 additional children, it was reported in June 1969 that 19 new centers accommodating 790 children had been established.

The national figures resulting from the 1967 amendments are no more encouraging. Like New York City, the federal government has not been able to shovel out the available money. Consider the situation around the time of the Nixon family assistance message. Of a projected June 1969 goal of 102,000 WIN enrollees, only 61,847 were in fact enrolled by the end of that month. Of a projected 100,000 child care arrangements, only about 49,000 children were receiving care at the end of June 1969, and 50 percent of them were receiving care in their own homes. Thus, when President Nixon proposed 150,000 new training slots and 450,000 new day care places in his August 1969 welfare message, the Labor Department and HEW had already found that 18 months after enactment of the 1967 legislation they were unable to meet more than 60 percent of their modest work and training goals or more than 50 percent of their even more modest day care goals.

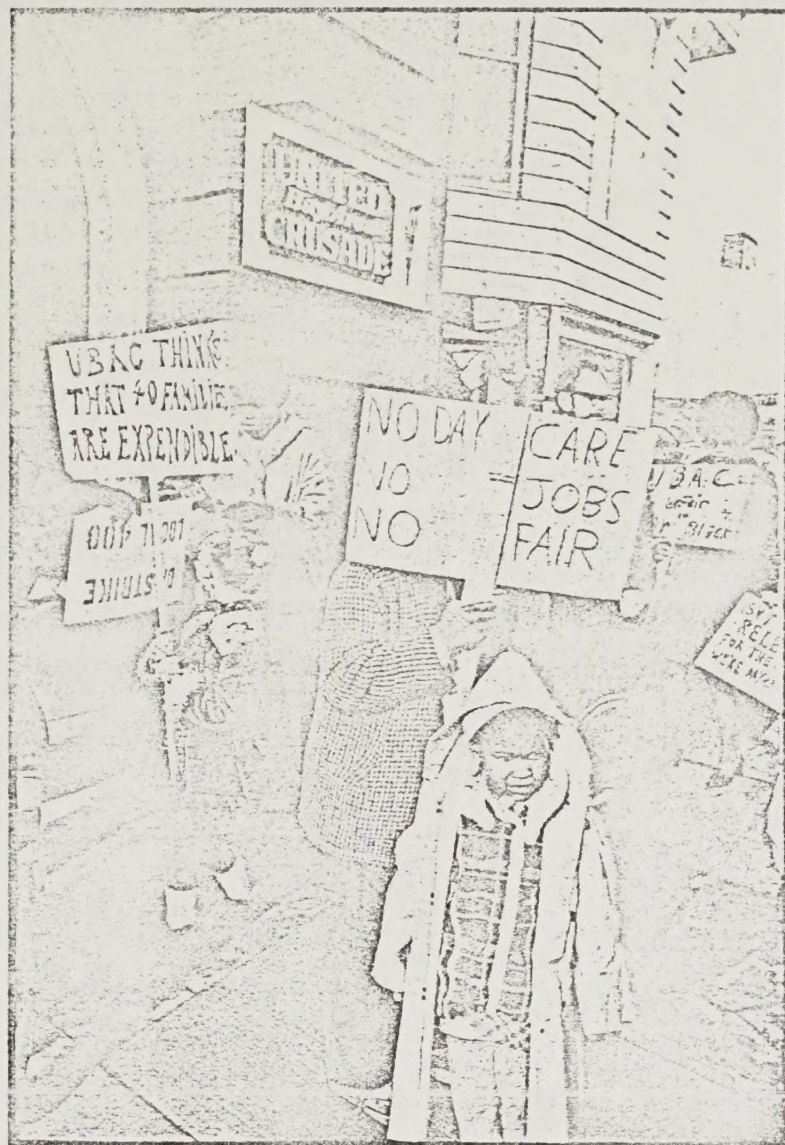
WIN Loses

The gap between original projections and depressing realities held constant into 1970. The Labor Department first estimated a WIN enrollment level of 150,000 at the close of fiscal 1970, later scaled the figure down to 100,000. And as of February 1970 the cumulative WIN data took the shape of a funnel:

Welfare recipients screened by local agencies for possible referral	1,478,000
Found appropriate for referral to WIN	301,000
Actually referred to WIN	225,000
Enrolled in WIN program	129,000
Employed	22,000

As for day care, 188,000 children were initially expected to be receiving "child care"—which includes care in their own homes by grandmothers or other relatives—on June 30, 1970. The target later was dropped to a more modest 78,000. In May 1970 there were just 61,000 reported in child care, and only about one-fifth of these children were really cared for in a day care facility. Approximately one-half were cared for in their own homes, one-tenth in a relative's home, and the last one-fifth were reported to have "other" arrangements—a category that actually includes "child looks after self."

By July 1970 the House Labor-HEW appropriations subcommittee was discouraged about the progress of work training-day care activity. "It doesn't sound too good," said



Chairman Dan Flood (Democrat of Pennsylvania) after hearing the WIN program statistics. The committee proposed a reduction of \$50 million from the administration's request for \$170 million in 1971 work incentive funds. There was no confusion about either the purpose of the program or its lack of accomplishment:

The objective of the work incentives program is to help people get off the welfare rolls and to place them in productive jobs. While the committee supports the program, it has just not been getting off the ground for several reasons, such as poor day care standards for children.

Unfortunately, the sorry history and the limitations of day care and work training as solutions to the welfare problem could not be faced by the administration's welfare specialists in 1970 because all of their energies were directed toward support for the Nixon family assistance plan. But after a few years it will inevitably be discovered that work training and day care have had little effect on the number of welfare dependents and no depressing effect on public relief costs. Some new solution will then be proposed, but the more realistic approach would be to accept the need for more welfare and to reject continued fantasizing about day care and "workfare" as miracle cures.

